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BAPTISM

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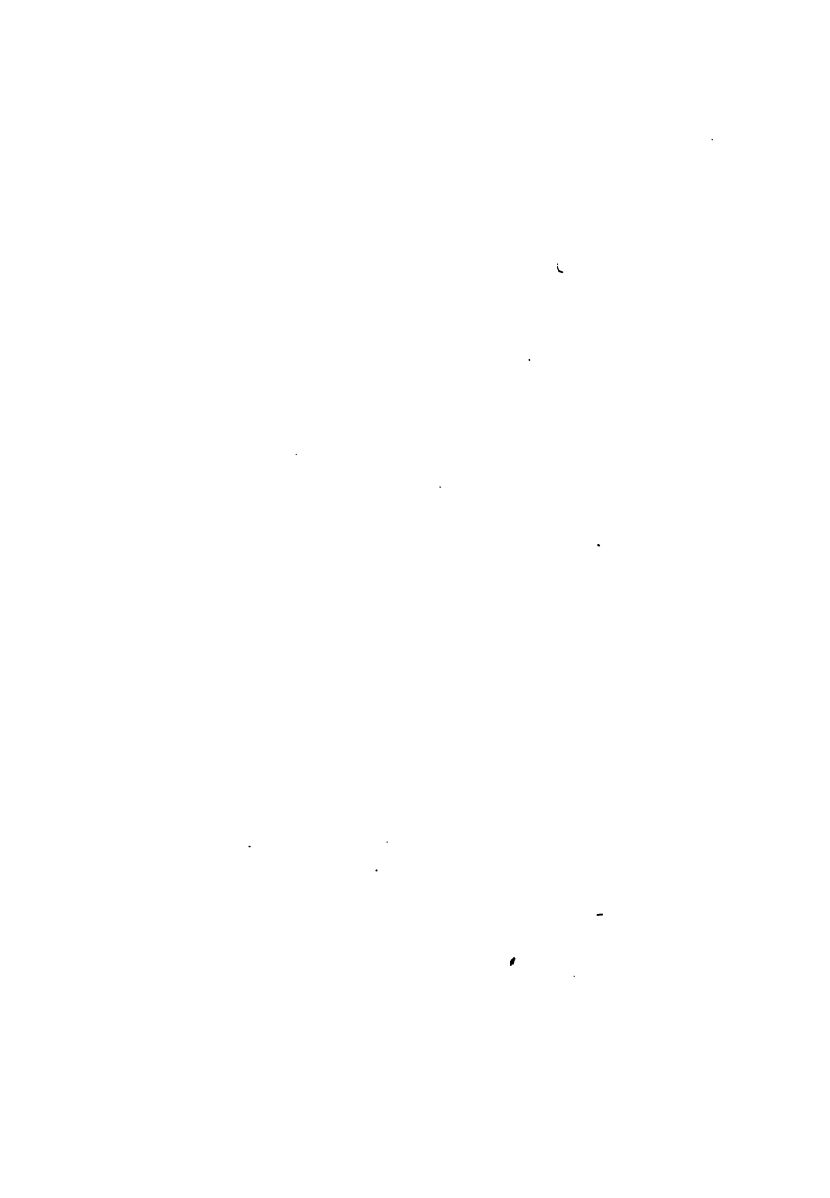
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THE
APOSTOLIC MODE
OF PERFORMING
BAPTISM :
ITS RELATION TO THE COVENANT ;
AND
WHO ARE PROPER SUBJECTS TO BE
RECEIVED INTO THE CHURCH.
ACCOMPANIED WITH
SCRIPTURAL PROOFS.

BY B. F. COOK

New York :

L. W. STARR, BOOK AND JOB PRINTER,
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the Southern District of New York.

P R E F A C E.

IN bringing this small work before the public, I wish it understood that it is not designed to be sectarian, or contraversial, but rather to trace out and present, in as clear and simple a manner as possible, the Apostolic mode of performing Baptism, with its use and design ; and, in order to do so, I have presented the subject in a different light from any other that I have ever seen.

I had, originally, no intention of publishing this composition, and my time being mostly occupied by business affairs, I have been unable to enter into as minute and accurate an arrangement, as I could wish, of the materials drawn from the Holy Scriptures, upon which my explanation rests.

I conclude with the hope, that this method of exposition may not be entirely lost upon the christian community, and that it may possibly lead many to a more just apprehension of the significance of so beautiful a symbol in the Church of Christ.

THE AUTHOR.

New York, May 22, 1860.

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THE APOSTOLIC

Mode of Performing Baptism.

CHAPTER I.

THE EXACT WAY THE APOSTLES PERFORMED BAPTISM.

THIS word is first introduced, or used in the New Testament, in connection with the preaching of John the Baptist, (*Math.* iii. 6.,) “and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.”

As every one will admit that John was a Jew, and, by descent, legally a Jewish priest as well as a prophet, the question arises, did he introduce a new doctrine in preaching repentance, and a new ordinance by baptizing for the remission of sins? In answering this question, we observe that the Jews were

always very sensitive in relation to the ordinances and ceremonies of their religion ; ready and quick to detect and persecute any heresy in doctrine ; (a) and no one can suppose they would have tolerated for a moment the introduction of a new ordinance, as baptism, into their ceremonies of religion without a decided opposition ; but, on the contrary, we find that John was extremely popular, his doctrines and baptism being so far from heresy, and so truly in accordance with the Jewish religion, that even the Pharisees themselves and the Sadducees came and desired to unite with him ; (b) indeed he is nowhere accused of heresy, nor were any that joined themselves to him expelled from the Jewish church for being baptized. Also the Savior's answer to John, " Suffer it to b

(a) *Acts* xxii. 4.—"And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women." 5th. "As also the high priest doth me witness, and all the estate of the elders ; from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound to Jerusalem, for to be punished." See *Acts* xxiv. vi. 13 and 14.

(b) *Matt.* iii. 7.—"But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism unto them, O generation of vipers, who shall you to flee from the wrath to come?"

so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness," is, in itself, sufficient proof, that the manner of baptism practiced by John, was the same that was practiced in the Jewish church and must have belonged to the ceremonial laws of that church ; for the Savior said, that he wished to be baptized that he might fulfill all righteousness or the law ; for he was made under the law, and came not to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfill. All commentators agree, that, at this baptism, the Savior was initiated into the Jewish priest' office. Bishop HORNE remarks "Jesus Christ as condescending to stand charged with our sins, and for that end being made under the law, was to fulfill the righteousness of the law as it consisted in an obedience to ceremonial as well as moral precepts." We conclude then, that the Savior, in order to fulfill righteousness, must have been baptized in obedience to some existing law of the Jewish church, and that John's manner of performing it, was in accordance with the mode practiced by the Jewish priests. It may appear strange, if John was truly a Jewish priest, and truly did preach what had been prophesied, viz. : that God

was about to manifest himself to them in a special manner, as in Malachi, (c) in order to fulfill his promises to them, in giving the Messiah, (Savior,) and if baptism was an ordinance of the Jewish church, it may appear strange, I say, that we do not find the same word in the Old Testament. But if we bear in mind, that the Old Testament was written in Hebrew and the new in Greek, we shall be relieved of embarrassment on this point, and also be prepared to thoroughly investigate the Jewish religion, and see if the same thing, viz : the remission or cleansing the soul of sins, was not performed the same by John, and differing, only in word, from the Jewish cleansing of the soul. By reading the 19th chapter of *Numbers*, where the ordinance of the Jewish church is first given, we can easily see, that, from the 1st to the 11th verses, directions are given for the priests to prepare water in a particular way, and to have it kept for the congregation, or

(c) *Mal. iii. 1.*—"Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me : and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in : behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts." See *Luke iii.*, from 1 to 20 verses.

church of Israel. The remainder of this chapter, teaches how this water was to be used, and for what purpose. (*d*) In verse 9, we read, "It shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel for a water of separation; that is a purification for sin." In the 17th verse, we read, "And for an unclean person, they (the priests) shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin, and running water shall be put thereto in a vessel." Now by taking verses 9 and 17 together, it is easy to see, that God would have them understand that sin polluted the soul, or, by sin, the soul became unclean. By verse 16, we see, that the body also, separate from the soul, might, by coming in contact with certain things, become unclean. That we may get a correct understanding of the Jewish faith, let us see if the Jews, even John and the Apostles, did not hold to the same principles; and if the idea of the pollution of the soul or body was discarded, let us see when and where. And, in order to

(*d*) *Nums. xix. 9.*—"And a man *that is* clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and lay *them* up without the camp in a clean place, and it shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel for a water of separation: *it is a purification for sin.*"

do this, and also, to better inform ourselves on this subject, let us first examine the pollution of the body, and then, the pollution of the soul.

In verse 16, we read, "And whosoever toucheth one that is slain with a sword in the open field, or a dead body, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days;" and in verse 20, if he does not use the means of purification, he is to be considered as remaining unclean, and whatever he toucheth, also becomes unclean; as in verse 22, certain diseases, as leprosy, and others that the flesh is heir to, rendered the person or body unclean, (e) and the Jews, in the time of John and the Apostles, adhered so closely to this doctrine, as, in *Mark*, (f) that,

(e) *Lev. xiii. 8.*—"And if the priest see, that behold, the scab spreadeth in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it *is* a leprosy."

Lev. xv. 2.—"Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When any man hath a running issue out of his flesh, *because of* his issue he *is* unclean."

(f) *Mark vii. 3.*—"For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash *their* hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders." 4th. "And *when they come* from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, *as* the washing of cups, and pots, and brassen vessels, and of tables."

"when they went to market, except they wash their hands, they eat not." In *John* xviii. 28, we read, "and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled."

Now as I have clearly proved, that the *body* became polluted by outward and uncontrollable circumstances, in which there was no actual sin ; I will now show that the *soul*, by acts of *sin* alone, against God, or man, becomes polluted. (g) In *Joshua* xxii. 17, 18, the Israelites are reminded of their *souls* being polluted by sin at Peor, and they are exhorted not to rebel against the Lord, and against them, their brethren, in building an altar to, and turning to the worship of Idols. In *II. Peter* ii. 20, we read, "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," &c. In *Ephesians*

(g) *Lev.* xviii. 21, 24.—"And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through *the fire* to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God : I *am* the LORD." "Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things : for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you :"

Lev. xvi. 30.—"For on that day shall *the priest* make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, *that* ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD."

iv. 22, christians are exhorted to "put off the old man, which is *corrupt* according to the deceitful lust," and "that ye put on the new man, which, after God is created in righteousness and true holiness;" also, *I. Timothy* vi. 5, "Perverse disputings of men of *corrupt minds* and destitute of the truth;" and in *Mark* vii. 15, "There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him, can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man;" 21st verse, "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders." 22d. "Thefts, covetousness, an evil eye; blasphemy, pride, foolishness." 23d. "All these evil things come from within, and *defile* the man."

Now I suppose, no one can doubt, after reading the above words of the Savior, that he intended us to understand, that actual sin had, and ever would pollute, or render the soul unclean, and it was so considered by the Jews, and so taught by the Apostles. Since then, that God has taught the Jewish people the pollution of the body, and the pollution of the soul, to be *two* distinct things, is plainly shown; I will next pro-

ceed to show the different manner of cleansing the body, and cleansing the soul. *Numbers* xix. 17, "And for an unclean person they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for *sin*, and running (river or spring) water shall be put thereto in a vessel." Verse 19, "And the clean person (priest,) shall *sprinkle* upon the unclean on the third day, and on the seventh day : *he* shall purify himself, and wash his clothes, and *bathe* himself in water, and shall be clean at evening." Verse 20, "But the man that shall be unclean, and shall not purify himself, that soul shall be cut off from among the congregation, because he hath defiled the sanctuary of the Lord : the water of separation hath not been sprinkled upon him ; he is unclean." Now, in verse 19, we imagine the person as defiled, both in soul and body ; and, for the purification of the soul, the priest is to sprinkle upon the person running water, as in verse 17, which is to answer for the cleansing or washing the soul of *sin*. But, for the cleansing of the body, the man is himself to wash his clothes, and bathe, or dip his own body in water, and he

shall be clean at evening. (*h*) We see in verse 20, if the person is not cleansed, both soul and body, he must be suspended or expelled from the Jewish church.

Some one may ask, how is it that the pollution of the body, signifies the pollution of the soul? In answer to this question, let the sentiment of the Jews, in reference to this point speak! They believed that if any man (as Job,) met with adverse fortune, or any great calamity, such as leprosy, or being lame, or blind, that it was the judgment of God, on account of sin; as in *John ix. 2*, "And his disciples asked him, saying, Master who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" Therefore, we see, that sin was implied in certain cases of *bodily* pollution, and, the necessity of having the soul cleansed, as well as the body; (*i*) but, in

(*h*) *Numbers xix. 7*.—"Then the priest shall wash his clothes, and he shall bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp, and the priest shall be unclean until the even." 8th. "And he that burneth her shall wash his clothes in water, and bathe his flesh in water, and shall be unclean until the even." 19th. "And on the seventh day he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and shall be clean at even."

(*i*) *Mark i. 40*.—"And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying

some bodily pollutions, they held there was no sin applicable ; as in *Numbers* xix. 22, "And whatsoever the unclean person toucheth shall be unclean ; and the soul (or person) that toucheth it shall be unclean until evening." Also, *Mark* vii. 3, 4, "The Jews, when they went to market, except they wash their hands, eat not." Hence, by the above, we can readily see why it was necessary to have both soul and body cleansed, in order to be in good standing in the Jewish church ; as in *Numbers* xix. 19, "And the clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean, on the third day and on the seventh day : and on the seventh day he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and shall be clean at even." We see, then, that sin alone polluted the soul, and, that in every instance where the soul is washed, or cleansed, it is done by the priests sprinkling running water upon the person ; and baptism, both by sprinkling and immersion, was in-

unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." 41st. "And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will ; be thou clean." 44th. "And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man : but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."

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should be made manifest in him." Therefore, the symbol of bodily pollution must have forever ceased from that time. But, the pollution of the soul, which is occasioned by sin alone, has not been repealed, but has been strengthened by the teachings of the Savior and the Apostles. And now, if we rightly understand the above; we shall be well prepared to enter upon the investigation of the requirements of John, and his manner of performing baptism. And we now desire to show, that repentance was required and considered necessary in the purification of the *soul*, and, that the repentance and baptism which John preached, was for the cleansing of the soul, as implied in *Math.* iii. 7, 8, in speaking to the Pharisees and Sadducees, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."

The reason John gives, why the Jews should be immediately purified, is, (*j*) the

(*j*) *Math.* iii. 2, 3.—"And saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." "For this is he (or I am he) that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

kingdom of heaven is at hand, or God is about to visit you, in giving the long promised king to sit upon the throne of David; and, if you wish his favor, your souls must be purified; for as *Malachi* iii. 2, says, "Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap." And in verse 5, "I will come near to you to judgment: and will be a swift witness against the sorcerers," &c.

Now, as these verses with the remainder of the chapter, give us a true idea of John's preaching, we can, at once, see why he required repentance and fruits of repentance as necessary, in order that they might be baptized, or have the symbol of purification of the soul applied.

If we will examine the scripture a little further, we shall see that John preached nothing more than other prophets had preached, viz.: That repentance, (which according to the original word in the scriptures, means change of mind, coming to one's senses,) or, a change, by turning from their evil ways to the service of God, was necessary in order to their souls being cleansed.

Joel ii. 12, 13, "Therefore also now, saith the Lord, Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning : and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God : " &c. *Ezekiel* xiv. 6, " Thus saith the Lord God ; Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols, and turn away your faces from all your abominations ; " do. xxxvi. 31, " Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities, and for your abominations." (k)

Now, there can be no doubt, that the Jews and Pharisees in John's day, perfectly understood what was meant by repentance and baptism, or having their souls cleansed, in order to bring themselves into the immediate presence of God, who, as John asserts, was about to visit them as a refiner or purifier of silver.

Now, I suppose, taking the above into

(k) *Isaiah* lv. 7.—" Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts : and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him ; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

consideration, if John had used the word purify, instead of baptize, no one would ever have doubted John's mode of baptism ; but, let us remember that a different language is here used to express the thing done, or to be done. Let us then examine the word baptize, and, in order to do so understandingly, we observe, there was no other nation or people, whose religious ceremonies were the same as those of the Jews, and of course there could not have been, in any of the languages of the earth, except the Hebrew, and that given of God expressly for the purpose, a word signifying the very thing done, or to be done, as purifying the soul ; for, you will remember, the *cleansing from sin*, was different from cleansing, or purifying the body. To purify the soul, the priests *sprinkled* water upon them ; but to purify the body, the person bathed, or immersed his body, and washed his clothes in water.

In writing the New Testament in Greek, we see, that of necessity, the Apostles were compelled to select some word of the Greek, to signify purification of the soul. The Greek word, Baptize, did signify the same as the Hebrew for purify did, when applied to

the purification of the *body*, as *separate* from the *soul*, viz. : to bathe, wash, or dip, with *other* meanings, as we shall presently see.

- Now, as the manner of purifying the soul, as separate from the body, was well understood in those days, there is no improbability in the supposition, that the Apostles would take the Greek word Baptize, instead of making a new one, or introducing the Hebrew purify ; and that the Jews, and John the Baptist, did use this word baptize to represent the mode of purifying, is clear, from the following. The Greek word for baptize, had a number of meanings, and, did not of itself, signify any particular mode, whether to dip, or sprinkle, but was understood from the context, or for what had been, or was to be done, as in *Hebrews* ix. 10, " Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings ; and also, the same word in *Mark* vii. 3, " For the Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not." Verse 4, " And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not, and many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and tables."

The Greek word for *baptize*, is used, instead of that for *wash* in the above, and no doubt, was intended to take the place of the *Hebrew*, for purifying, or the English to cleanse ; referring doubtless, to the traditions delivered to the Jews, in *Numbers* xix. 18, "And a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon all the *persons* that were therein."

Now the sprinkling here, is intended to mean, wash or purify, or cleanse, and has the same meaning as the Greek word for baptize, or wash has in *Mark* vii. 3, 4. Dr. OWEN observes, that the word baptize, nowhere in the scriptural use of the word, signifies to dip, and with few exceptions, all the educated men for ages past, have agreed, that it (Baptize,) did mean to sprinkle, as well as to wash, and, when performed as a symbol of cleansing the *soul* from pollution, it was always done by *sprinkling*. We are farther strengthened in this belief, by the prophecies concerning the christian church : *Isaiah* lii. 13, "Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high." Verse 15, "So

shall he sprinkle many nations." *Ezekiel* xxxvi. 25, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." Verse 26, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."

We see in these verses, that it is from sin, or the pollution of the soul, that they are to be cleansed, and the symbol of regeneration is performed by sprinkling clean water upon them. Wherever the cleansing of the soul, (not the body,) is symbolized in the Bible, sprinkling is used as that symbol. Now that John uses the word baptize, to signify *purifying* from *sin*, no one can doubt, as he required repentance; and that the disciples of John, and also the Jews, understood the Greek word baptize, to mean the same as the Hebrew for purify, is plain from the following passage: *John* iii. 25, 26, "Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews, about *purifying*." "And they came unto John, and said, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, (mean-

ing Jesus,) to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same *baptizeth*." They use the word *purify* and *baptize*, in the same breath, and evidently understood them to mean the same thing; as the question was, whether the Savior had a right to baptize or purify at all? We must, then, understand that John performed baptism as the Jews had ever done. *Numbers* xix. 17, "They shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for *sin*, and *running* water shall be put thereto in a *vessel*." Verse 19, "And the clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean," &c.

Now, as the Bible nowhere speaks of immersion, where the purification of the *soul* is symbolized, (though it speaks of the person dipping his body to cleanse it of pollution,) and as we have positive proof in the words of John's disciples, and the Jews, and also an abundance of inferential proof, as represented in the baptism of the spirit, &c.; I ask, what doubt need there be, concerning the mode of John's performing baptism? The question then is, did the Savior, or his Apostles, *change* the mode of baptizing?

In *Acts* xix. 3, "And he said unto them,

Unto what then were ye baptized ? And they said, unto John's baptism." Verse 4, "Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should *believe* on *him* which *should come* after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." Verse 5, "When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." *Math.* xxviii. 19, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." *Galatians* iii. 27, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." Verse 28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female : for ye are all one in Christ." *Acts* ii. 38, "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

By the passages I have quoted, we see that the mode of baptism as practiced by John, was not changed, except in adding the Trinity ; even repentance being required of those who had sinned. But there is evidently a change in this respect, that it is

made to take the place of circumcision, for they who are baptized have put on Christ, and are admitted into his family, and are all one with him. (l)

In conclusion then, we observe that baptism was designed as a symbol of cleansing the soul by the blood of Christ, as in *I. Peter* i. 2, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." And as all men have sinned, and become polluted, and as none but those who are of a pure heart can be admitted into his family, so do we all need this symbol (baptism) of cleansing by the blood of Christ administered, that we may be admitted to membership in his church. As to the mode, we must believe that it is

(l) *Romans* iv. 11.—"And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had yet* being uncircumcised : that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be *imputed unto them* also." 23d. "Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was *imputed* to him." 24th. "But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if *we believe* on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead."

Galatians iii. 27.—"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ."

proper to take running, (*m*) or pure water, and put it in a clean vessel, and then for the minister who acts in *His* name, as John and the Apostles did, to sprinkle upon the person in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

There is no other mode spoken of in the Bible, as being performed to represent cleansing of the soul.

Walk in the light, and obey God—rather than man !

(*m*) *Math.* iii. 5, 6.—“Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan.” “And were baptized of him in *Jordan*, (running water,) confessing their sins.”

Also, *Numbers* xix. 17.—“And *running* water shall be put thereto in a *vessel*.” 18th. “And a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water, and *sprinkle* it upon the *persons* that were there.”

CHAPTER II.

BAPTISM—ITS USE AND WHAT IT SYMBOLIZES
OR REPRESENTS. SHOWING ITS RELATION
TO THE COVENANT, ETC.

HAVING shown the manner in which the Apostles performed baptism, and one of the objects that it symbolized, viz. : The cleansing of the soul by the renewing influences of the Holy Ghost, through the blood of Jesus Christ ; I now proceed to another important purpose, for which baptism is used under the gospel dispensation, and that is—The Admission of Members into the Church !

And in the first place, I assert that the ceremony performed in admitting to the church, whether by circumcision or baptism, is, and always has been a symbol of the *faith* of the members of the church. And, by strictly bearing in mind this principle, we shall be able to arrive at right conclusions, *as to the reasons* for changing the ceremony,

or seal, from the circumcision of the Jews, to the christian dispensation, or purification.

Firstly : If the church is founded upon faith, and the ceremony of admission is a symbol of that faith, how does the new dispensation differ in faith, from the old ? For we believe, that from the foundation of the world there is but one way, and no other name besides the Lord Jesus, given among men, whereby we must be saved. In searching the scriptures then, we find, that God revealed to Adam, Methusalah, Noah, and others, as in *Hebrews*, chapter ix., his gracious plan of redemption through the Savior ; and that from Adam, down to Abraham, there were many who believed in the promise, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head ; or, that God, through man, would provide a ransom for the great loss sustained in Adam. The worship and sacrifices, from Abel to Abraham, are proof, that they understood the nature of Christ's mission on earth. It is certain, that God often appeared to Abraham, and conversed with him—no doubt revealing to him, many of the particulars of the Messiah's coming, as in *Genesis*, he says, " I will bless them that

bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee : And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." In *Romans* iv. 3, we are told, that "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness," God knowing Abraham's faith in what he had revealed to him.

In reference to the Savior, He comes to Abraham, and proposes to make him the instrument, in bringing about this greatest of heaven's blessings to a lost race. In *Genesis* xviii. 19, God says, "For I know him, (Abraham,) that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment ; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him."

In what then did Abraham's faith consist ? Was it not that, through his children, God would raise up the Messiah, to come, and, in his death, make an atonement for the sin of Adam, which was eternal death of soul and body, even without hope ? *Romans* v. 12, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Abraham believed that the Savior *was* to

come, and not that he had already come, as we have *now* to believe.

Upon this faith of Abraham, then, was the first church founded. God appears to Abraham, and proposes a covenant, wherein each should bind himself to labor for the accomplishment of this great event. *Luke* i. 72, 73, "To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant." "The *oath* which he sware to our father Abraham." While God's part of the work was to be supernatural—Abraham's was to be mental and physical ; or the works of his hands were to show his faith ; he was to seal the covenant with his own blood in circumcision, and so were his children, his servants, and their children, consecrating all to this cause. *Genesis* xvii. 26, "In the self-same day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son." 23d, "And Abraham took all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin, in the self-same day, as God had said unto him." As circumcision, or the shedding of blood, admits to the covenant church, we see that it

was a symbol of faith, and so also was their worship, in shedding the blood of bulls and goats ; it all points to Christ—the seed of Abraham, whose blood was to be shed for many, for the remission of sins. God and Abraham, having arranged all the details of this covenant, (*Genesis* xvii. 9 to 17,) both continued to observe it, even to the coming of Christ. *Luke* ii. 21, “And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called Jesus, which was so named of the angel.”

But, what has the faith of Abraham, or circumcision, the symbol of his faith which admitted members to the Jewish church, to do with baptism, as admitting members into the Christian church ?

I answer—Everything ! The covenant that God made with Abraham, was an everlasting covenant ! *Genesis* xvii. 7, “And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant ; (or church,) to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.” God working on the one hand, and that of Abraham’s seed on the other, will be continued ; but, if the church

enters upon a new part, or dispensation of this covenant, the seal must be changed so as to symbolize their faith and work yet to be accomplished. To be sure, that part of the covenant which has reference to the coming and death of Christ, has been accomplished; but, if God and his people should cease working, not a soul would be saved—for the covenant is an everlasting covenant of works. Christ having come—circumcision, the symbol of his coming, which admitted to the church, must of necessity cease; as it could not point, as a matter of faith, to his *coming* any longer!

How then does our faith differ from Abraham's? He believed in, and labored for the coming of Christ! We not only believe that he has come, but are to believe and labor with God, for the *results* to be produced by the death of Christ; our faith in him and in the atonement, is not changed because of his death, but is rather strengthened! Neither has the covenant of grace been changed, for it is unchangeable. (*Isaiah* liv. 10, do. lv. 3.) But we do, at the death of Christ, enter upon a new part, or dispensation of the same covenant, closing up the

first, or old part, and bringing in the second, or new part, which is called a new covenant, or testament.

In *Hebrews* viii. 5, 7, 8, 9, we find that the results under the first part of the covenant, were not satisfactory, or *perfect*. In verses 10, 11, 12, 13, we are told the work of God will be quite different and new, as compared with that of the Jewish, or first part; "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God." "And they shall not teach every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away."

The work of God, then, under the new covenant, or, more properly, the christian dispensation, is to renew, purify and *cleanse the hearts* of men, by the Holy Spirit apply-

ing the blood of Christ, and by his continually enlightening the minds of men ; and, as the Jews labored with God to bring about the result of the coming and death of Christ, so we are to be co-workers with him, in producing the weighty consequences which are to flow from his death. For, how shall they believe in him, in whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher ? But, the *church* of *sacrifices*, pointing to Christ's coming, having closed at his death, the church of purifying and purging from sin commenced : " For though their sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow." All who belong to Christ's kingdom, or church, must have clean hands, and a pure heart ; therefore, the necessity of changing the *seal*, or symbol of admission to the *new church*. For, if circumcision, which admitted to the Jewish church, was a symbol of the sacrifice that Christ offered, so purification is the symbol of that for which we are to labor, viz. : the regeneration and sanctification of the souls of men, through the word. Both of these seals of admission represent the *faith*, and state of the church. Moreover, baptism under the Jewish dispen-

sation, was the symbol of purity. If any member of that church had sinned, he was expelled from the society, or church, unless he was purified within three day's after the sacrifice was offered for his sins, as in *Numbers* xix. 19, 20.

The Savior in his command to the Apostles, *Math.* xxviii. 19, 20, says, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," &c. As the Apostles had been taught of Jesus, and made clean, (*John* xv. 3, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you,") so they were to teach others, as they had been taught, and all who felt the importance of, and believed in these truths, were to have the symbol of purity placed upon them, as in *Acts* ii, 37 to 42.

Therefore we see that Christ did fix upon baptism, as the ordinance for admitting to his church ; and that baptism represents the faith, and work of the members of his church, and, that the covenant which God made with Abraham, has not been changed, *Acts*

ii. 39, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off;" only, that we have entered upon the second part, which required a new seal to express our faith and works ; and the seal that Christ selected, had ever been used, under the Jewish dispensation, to express purity, and this was now the only thing that could express our faith, and knowledge of the work to be done.

We see then that faith, in adults, from the foundation of the world, is necessary, in order to become a party to this covenant, which God made with Adam, Noah, Abraham and others.

Trusting, that we have established that *baptism* is the symbol which Christ ordained to admit to the christian church, and that it has taken the place of circumcision, I will leave that subject for the present.

CHAPTER III.

CERTAIN PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE EXPLAINED,
IN WHICH BAPTISM IS SPOKEN OF IN A FIG-
URATIVE SENSE, IN CONNECTION WITH THE
LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN.

INASMUCH as the *purity* of the life of the individual is much spoken of by the Apostles, in connection with administering the symbol, (baptism,) and spoken of in a figurative sense, I shall here examine a few of the passages in this reference.

In *Colossians* ii. 13, the Apostle, addressing the christians, reminds them of their former condition, and the change they underwent at conversion; "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he (Christ) quickened (made alive) with himself, having forgiven you all trespasses."

The first thing demanding attention in this verse is, the death of sin, which in verse

11, (a) is called the *body* of the sins of the flesh, making their sins assume a *body*. He farther says, that their sinful *body* is dead ; but Christ has created in you a new life, even his own pure, glorious, eternal life. Here, then, we have a spiritual death and a spiritual resurrection spoken of, and in verse 12, we read, that this death and resurrection were accomplished at the time they were baptized. (This service consists of *two parts* : *First*, the renouncing the world, &c. ; then declaring their faith.) The renunciation of the world is spoken of as a burial service. These christians had heretofore lived in, and for the enjoyments of this world, but when they presented themselves before the congregation for baptism, they publicly renounce forever, their former life, (the *body* of sin,) their sinful pleasures, their worldly companions, and the lusts of their own flesh ; agreeing and confessing, that their body of sin should now terminate—*die* ! This spiritual body of sin, the Apostle says, you

(a) *Colossians* ii. 11.—“In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.”

buried (renounced) with Christ in, or at the time of baptism ; wherein, also, ye are risen with him to a new and spiritual life, when, publicly, you declared your faith of the operation of God, who raised him from the dead.

The denunciation of the *life* (body) of sin, is considered the *burial*, and forms the first part of the service, and being baptized, (purified,) the symbol of the resurrection of the new life. We understand, then, by the above, that the Apostle was reminding them of what they had professed, at the time of baptism, without reference to the mode of performing it ! And farther, he makes this an argument, showing why they should try to live more spiritually and devotedly than they had done. He says, " If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, also mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth," &c. In *Romans* vi. 3, 4, the Apostle brings in the same figure, but in a different light. He says, " Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death ?" 6th, " Knowing *this*, that our old man is crucified with him,

that the *body* of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." 10th, "For in that he died, (not by being baptized,) he died unto sin once : but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." As Christ's body died unto sin, so their life (body) of *sin*, was to die from their thoughts and affections. Verse 4th, reads as follows : "Therefore we (our sinful body or life,) are buried with him by baptism into death." I will explain it thus : Therefore in the act of purification, (baptism,) we recognise the new life ; our former life, the body of sin, has been renounced, put out of our thoughts, buried. In this way, your body of sin is buried into the death of Christ. If we see the kernel of grain *sprout*, (*b*) we conclude that the kernel is decaying ; so, by *baptism*, we recognize the commencement of the pure life of Christ in us, and of course the decay of the old life of sin. That, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the father, even so, we should also walk in newness of

(*b*) *Math.* xiii. 23.—"But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it ; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred-fold, some sixty, some thirty."

life ; for if we have been planted together in the *likeness* of his death, our resurrection, or new life, will be like his—pure and undefiled. What likeness, then, has water baptism to Christ's death ? You see, they were buried into Christ's death, which was on the *cross*, and not in his *tomb* ! As he died *unto* the world, not by being put in the tomb—but on the cross, so they, at the time they were baptized, by that act professed to have crucified in themselves the world, with the affections and lusts thereof, as Christ's worldly body died to the world. Thus, they were planted in the likeness of his death—but not by any mode of performing baptism.

Water baptism is a symbol of the purity and faith of the church, and, was *not* ordained to admit into a dead and corrupt church, as the tomb would represent, but into Christ's living *body* which is the church, he being the moving spirit thereof. Water is a symbol of purity, and *cannot* be in the same case, a symbol of corruption. It is certain the Apostle did not mean that our *bodies*, when baptized, should be in the likeness of Christ's when crucified ; if he did, *he* would make *baptize* mean, our bodies are

to die upon the cross, in the likeness of his death. But we find, that Christ's body died upon the cross, and his soul, by the resurrection, was dissevered from the temptations and influence of the sins of this world.

Now we find, that our bodies are the receptacles of two spiritual lives, the first a life of sin, the second a life of faith. Now when faith comes the life of sin dies, and this death is announced, at the time of baptism, by confessing their faults, when, all christians, as does Christ, forever *bury* in their thoughts this life of sin. Then baptism, or purification, the recognition of the new, pure life of faith, is applied, symbolizing the life of Christ, that is within us. In the 22d verse, we read, "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." *I. Corinthians* x. 1, 2, 3, 4, "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea." "And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." "And did all eat the same spiritual meat." "And did all drink the same spiritual drink :

(For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them : and that Rock was Christ.)”

The Apostle, in writing this epistle to the church of Corinth in the 7th chapter, speaks to them, as those having received christian baptism, and, by this, reminds them of their faith in Christ—his mission on earth, his life, his death, his resurrection and the atonement he made. In chapter 8th, he exhorts them to exert a greater christian influence, and, if need be, to practice self-denial. In chapter 9th, he refers them to his own life of self-denial and afflictions, in order to encourage them to hold, and persevere in their christian life. And in chapter 10, he is about to reprove them for living in the cold and careless state they did. He, therefore, reminds them of the *unbelief* of their fathers in Moses, when encamped at the Red Sea, and of the dreadful danger that threatened them ; (c) but when they saw the triumph of Moses, and the *evi-*

(c) *Exodus* xiv. 11, 12, 13, 14. “And they said unto Moses, Because *there were* no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness ? Wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt ?” 12th. “*Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may*

dence that God was with him in the *cloud*, and in the sea turning *back*, they were baptized, purified of their unbelief in Moses and in the Lord, and did all drink (watch,) the instructions and follow the movement of the cloud, which was Christ. (d) Chapter 15, shows the state of their hearts, being baptized, or *purified* of unbelief. In 21st verse, "And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously : the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea ;" showing the state of their hearts, being baptized, *purified* of unbelief in Moses and the Lord.

It is evident, the Apostle in using the words "They were baptized in the cloud, and in the sea," had no reference to any mode of water, or any other kind of outward baptism. It was the change of mind from

serve the Egyptians? For *it had been* better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness." 13th. "And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD." 14th. "The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace."

(d) *Exodus* xiv. 31, "And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians : and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses."

unbelief, to faith in Moses and the Lord. Thus, their souls were purified, or, in Greek, baptized.

Water baptism is the symbol of this state of the heart ; but there is no reason to suppose that the symbol was applied in this case, as the Lord did not give the ordinance until some time after this. See *Numbers* 19th chapter. But these Jews, full of faith and joy, with a pure heart, started on their journey, but at the first place they encamped, which was Marah, *Exodus* xv. 23, because the water *was bitter*, their faith failed them, and their joy was turned into mourning, and murmuring. This then, was what Paul wished to remind those Corinthians of, in order to strengthen them against temptation, and afflictions ; he says, in verses 5, 6, " But with many of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness." Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.

The Savior speaks of the baptism of fire, which is supposed to mean the cleansing of the heart by afflictions and temptations. The baptism of the Holy Ghost certainly means

purifying the soul. Now, if I should speak of a Jew as having been purified, you would understand by the word purify, that the person had performed all the ceremony required of him by the law of the Jewish church! (e) So in reading the New Testament, the word baptize is used in the same sense that the word purify is in the old. In reading of a person as having been baptized, we are to understand that the person has performed all the requirements of the Apostles. (f) The Savior uses the word in this

(e) *Numbers* xv. 27, 28.—“And if any soul sin through ignorance, then he shall bring a she-goat of the first year for a sin-offering.” “And the priest shall make an atonement for the soul that sinneth ignorantly, when he sinneth by ignorance before the Lord, to make an atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven him.” Also, chapter xix. 9. “And a man *that is* clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and lay *them* up without the camp in a clean place, and it shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel for a water of separation: it *is* a purification for sin.”

(f) *Acts* ii. 37, 38.—“Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?” “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Also, chapter x. 47, 48. “Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?” “And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.”

sense when he asks the question—"the baptism of John?" &c. (g)

Referring to the baptism of the spirit that accompanied John's preaching, water-baptism, when applied, was the symbol that the work was finished and complete, unless specification is made. John, in speaking of himself as baptizing, (h) specifies that he baptized with water, and points to Jesus as baptizing with the Holy Ghost. Now it appears to me that we need no farther proof that the word baptize wherever it is used, (unless specification is made,) signifies the purifying of the heart by the Holy Spirit, as well as the application of water.

(g) *Mark xi. 30.*—"The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? answer me."

(h) *John i. 33.*—"And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost."

CHAPTER IV.

WHO ARE PROPER SUBJECTS TO RECEIVE BAPTISM.

Who are proper subjects for Christian Baptism? In *Math.* xxviii. 19, 20, we read, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." In *Mark* xvi. 15, 16, "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not, shall be damned." Verse 20th, "And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following." Luke says, he told them to preach to all nations repentance, and re-

mission of sins, in his name. Now if we consider the three narratives of the Savior's command, as given by the Apostles, we shall find that they all agree upon one point, though it is not expressed in the same words, and that is, *faith* !

Matthew relates what the Savior told them to do, as Apostles : they were to instruct all nations, and baptize. Now baptism here implies faith, for none were to be compelled to be baptized—it was taken as evidence of their faith. The language of Mark is rather more definite. "He that believeth and is baptized." The desire on the part of the applicant to have baptism, the symbol of purity, applied, is to be received as evidence that his soul has been made clean through *faith* in their word, "For now are ye clean through the word I have spoken." Luke says, the Savior told them to teach repentance and remission of sins. Repentance here implies *faith* in the power of Christ, through the atonement, to remit sins. For, who would repent of sinning against a God in whom they had no faith ? Should there be any doubt on this point, we may become *convinced* by referring to the sermons of the

Apostles, recorded in Acts, and especially that of Peter, in chapter 2d. We conclude then, that all persons who are capable of understanding the doctrines of the New Testament, are required to have faith, in order to receive baptism.

Are Children or those incapable of understanding these doctrines, to be excluded from receiving Baptism ?

The question then arising here is, "Are Children or those incapable of understanding these doctrines to be excluded from baptism ?"

Peter says, in *Acts* ii. 39, "For the promise is unto you, and to your *Children*, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

Here let us keep in mind, that Peter was a Jew, had belonged to the Jewish church, and well understood all the doctrines of that church ; and those whom he addressed were also Jews, who had been brought up in the faith. What then did they understand

him to mean ? If we look at the 2d chapter of Acts, from the 14th to 37th verse, we find that the whole of Peter's argument tends to this—that God, in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, had fulfilled that part of his promise in the covenant, which was, "And in thee (Abraham) shall all the families of the earth be blessed ;" and God renewing this promise to David, in words to this effect, "That of the fruits of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne." Verse 33, "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, all power is given unto him in heaven, and in earth." The idea is this, God in eternity, (a) before the world was, (b) entered into covenant with Jesus Christ to this effect: That he should take upon him our flesh, (c) and suffer temptation,

(a) *Hebrews* x. 7, 10.—"Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God." "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

(b) *II. Timothy* i. 9.—"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the *world* began."

(c) *Hebrews* x. 5.—"Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me."

and upon the cross make an atonement for our sins ; and in his body of flesh he should rise incorruptible, and should be God to the human family in every respect, (d) and so reign till all his enemies are put under his feet ; and after the judgment, he is to deliver up to the Father the kingdom as it was.

Everything, as far as concerns man's salvation, is ordered and carried on by Jesus Christ ; He can call to his aid angels and all the powers of heaven, as well as those of earth, in carrying on this great work. Therefore the church was instituted upon faith in him, and commenced with Abraham and his family.

Now, Abraham believed God—but it is not supposed that Abraham's children were more intelligent, or knew more about God, than our children at the present day. In fact, nearly all the members of the Jewish church were received during infancy, and yet, there were many adults, proselytes, received, but they were all required to have

(d) *Hebrews* x. 12, 13.—“ But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, *for ever* sat down on the right hand of God.” “ From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.”

faith. But the children of these proselytes as well as of the Jews, were admitted on the faith of their parents. This was the command of God. (e) Now Peter tells the adults, that God had, according to the covenant, sent Jesus Christ, and, in order to avail themselves of the blessings to be derived from his resurrection, they must believe in him—faith being required in them, as in Abraham. But, does Peter exclude children? He says, “For the promise is unto you, and your children.”

The requisite—faith, in adults, is the same under the Jewish dispensation as under the christian, and we cannot doubt, that children of believers were to be admitted then, as under the former dispensation. One may suppose, that Peter meant, the time when the children should arrive at the years of discretion, and had obtained a knowledge of the plan of redemption ; that then they might receive the blessing. He certainly could not have intended, that the young children

(e) *Genesis* xvii. 13.—“He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised : and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.”

were of no account in the sight of God ? No ! the word child, in the mind of the Jew, when in connection with the covenant, meant an infant eight days old. When Abraham received the promise, "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee," could he have understood God to mean his children, after they were grown up ? But some insist, that religion, under the christian dispensation, is different from that under the Jewish ! They assert, that, in order to be baptized, the individual must have repented, and been born again, all of which would certainly exclude children of a young age from the ceremony of baptism,

But in what has religion changed ? Did not Abraham, and all the faithful *believe* in Jesus Christ. (*f*) Faith in Jesus Christ, the foundation, the corner stone, is the same, unchanged. Has prayer, in or out of the

(*f*) *Hebrews* xi. from 4 to 40.—"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." "By faith Enoch was translated." "Noah prepared the ark." "Abraham obeyed." "Sarah received strength." "Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, Gedeon, Samson, Jephthae, David, Samuel, and all the prophets—All obtained a good report through *faith*."

church, been changed ? (g) Has singing of praises to God been changed ? The Book of Psalms is a standing proof, that it has not ! (h) Have preaching, and reading the word of God, been changed ? (i) But some, at the present day, forbid the bringing of children to Christ, because they have not repented, and been born again ! As for regeneration, its necessity is so obvious, that

(g) *Genesis* xx. 7.—“Now therefore restore the man *his* wife ; for he *is* a prophet, and he shall *pray* for thee, and thou shalt live.”

Genesis xxi. 33.—“And *Abraham* planted a grove in Beersheba, and *called* there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God.” See *I. Samuel* ii., from 1 to 12. *Psalms* lv. 17 and 12. *II. Kings* viii. 22 to 31. *Luke* i. 9, 10. “According to the custom of the priest’s office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.” “And the whole multitude of the people were praying without, at the time of incense.”

(h) *Psalms* xcii. 1.—“*It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High.*” Chapter xcv. 1. “O come, let us sing unto the LORD.” Chapter xcvi. 1. “O sing unto the LORD a new song : sing unto the LORD, all the earth.”

(i) *Psalms* lxxiii. 17.—“Until I went into the *sanctuary* of God ; *then* understood I their end.”

Exodus xxiv. 7.—“And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people.”

Acts xv. 21.—“For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath-day.” See *Deut.* xvii. 19, also, *Acts* xiii. 15.

all who have been saved, no doubt must have been regenerated while on the earth. (*j*) The child of the Jew, that was received into the church, must have been born again, as our children. But regeneration is the work of Christ, and not of man ! We hold then, that the need of regeneration has not been done away with ! As for repentance, the child has committed no sin that demands repentance. Christ held them out as an example for adults ; he said, " Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." " Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye can not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Who then is he, that will say to the child, stand aside, for I am more holy than thou ! (*k*) Or, who dare forbid the mother bringing her child to consecrate it, in covenant to Christ ?

(*j*) *Romans* iii. 9.—" What then ? are we better *than they* ? No, in no wise : for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under *sin*. See also 23d verse.

(*k*) *I. Corinthians* vii. 14.—" For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband : else were your children unclean : but now are they holy."

We find, then, that faith, prayer, songs of praise, preaching, repentance and regeneration, were all in the belief of the Jewish church; and even baptism, the symbol of purity, was included in the doctrines of their faith! What then, is the difference in the religion or ceremonies of the two churches? No difference, except the being baptized in the Trinity, and this is truly coming to Christ! The observance of circumcision and sacrifice ceased when Christ died, because they could point no longer to the shedding of his blood. But then the Lord's supper was instituted, to take their place—as the sacrifices pointed to his coming; so the Lord's supper, the bread and the wine, point to his death! Circumcision of the heart, by the Holy Ghost, is substituted for circumcision of the flesh. Jesus Christ offered himself a sacrifice for our sins, once for all, to take the place of the sacrifices of bulls and goats; and is forever set down at the right hand of God, in the seat of power and dominion, having entered into the Holy of Holies, He has become the Great High Priest, instead of the Levitical Priesthood! *Shall not then our children be as those in*

times before ? (l) and shall we be forbidden to take our children to this our Priest, for consecration ? Does not Peter comprehend all this, when he says, "The promise is unto you and to your children."

Baptism, as we before endeavored to show, has taken the place of circumcision, as the seal of the covenant, and as the emblem of faith ; and moreover, when nearly all were received during infancy ! Certainly faith was necessary ; Peter preached, and we believe the covenant to be unchanged ! (m) We also believe that God is unchangeable ! Why then are not infants proper subjects for baptism and union with the church of Christ ? (n) Is there any command of

(l) *Jeremiah xxx. 20.*—"Their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them."

(m) *Galatians iii. 16, 17.*—"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many ; but as of one, And to *thy seed*, which is Christ." "And this I say, *that the covenant*, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect."

(n) *Romans ii. 28, 29.*—"Neither *is that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh." "But he *is a Jew*, which is one inwardly ; and circumcision *is that*

Christ, or his Apostles, that infants should be excluded from the church? Rather has he not commanded, that they should be brought unto him. (o) None were rejected, but all who come in faith are rewarded. (p) Surely we may exclaim with the Apostle, "For even that which was made glorious, had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that exalteth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious."

of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God." Chapter xi. 17, 18. "And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive-tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree." "Boast not against the branches."

(o) *Luke* ii. 21, 22.—"His name was called Jesus." "And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present *him* to the Lord."

Mark x. 14, 16.—"But when Jesus saw *it*, he was much *displeased*, and said unto them, Suffer the *little* children to come unto me," and forbid them *not*; for of such is the kingdom of God." See *Genesis* xvii. 18 to 22. *I. Samuel* i. 24 to 28. *II. Timothy* i. 5. *Jeremiah* xxxi. 1.

(p) *Matthew* viii. 13.—"And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, *so* be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour." Chapter vii. 7. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

We must believe then, that every element of religion which now exists, or has been revealed, did exist under the Jewish dispensation ; but what was then revealed in types and shadows, has given way to the glorious reality. But, in all this, we can find no reason why the qualification of subjects, to be admitted into the church, from the beginning till Christ came, should be changed. If so, Christ must have changed in his plan of redemption, as promised in the covenant. But, I insist, there was no alteration made, in regard to the subjects who should be received into the church. To be sure the Jewish church *had* at the time of Christ's coming, lost much of its spirituality, (q) but was re-organized with Christ, as its head, and the Holy Spirit as its regenerating and sanctifying power. The middle wall of partition being broken down, salvation was

(q) *Matthew* xv. 6, 7, 8.—“Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your traditions.” “Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying.” “This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with *their* lips ; but their *heart* is far from me.” Chapter xxiii. 3. “All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do ; but do not ye after their works : for they say, and do not.”

offered freely, through faith, to the Gentiles. As to the Jews, circumcision, the mark of distinction as children of God, ceased, and so the Gentiles were, by *baptism*, grafted into the stock of Abraham, and became heirs according to the promise. But, neither faith, regeneration, nor any of the spiritual elements constituting the belief of the ancient church, that were necessary to qualify adults for joining the church, were altered ; so the Apostles understood it. (r) There was therefore no necessity for a *command*, that children *should* be *baptized*, for it was understood that the child was to be received as before ; but if it was to be excluded, a special command would have been needed. But there is no such command, and no Jew has complained that his children were excluded from the church of Christ. But, I assert that we have positive evidence, that children were baptized, and received into the church !

(r) *Acts* xv. 16.—“After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down ; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up.” 17th verse, “That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all *these things*.” See *Romans* iii. 31 ; also, iv. 11, 12.

The Apostle says, in *Acts* xv. 5, 23, 24, "But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which *believed*, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, (the Gentiles,) and to command them to keep the law of Moses." Here we see, that these Pharisees were believers or christians, and that they went out from Jerusalem to Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia, among the Gentiles, and preached to them that they must not only be baptized, but circumcised, in order to join the church! I ask, then why should these christians, Jews, make this demand of the Gentiles, if *they* had not, at Jerusalem, been in the habit of both circumcising and baptizing, in admitting members into the church! I can conceive of no other reason, and if I am right in my assumption, the proof is positive, that they at Jerusalem admitted *infants*, for all the *men* of the Jews had been circumcised in infancy. But, in this dispute, after much controversy, the Apostles decided, that, as God had put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith, the Gentiles need not be circumcised! But, we have proof, as positive as language can express, that, not only the Jews, but the

Gentiles did admit children into the church. In *Acts* xxi. 17, we find, that "Paul arrived at Jerusalem," and the 18th verse reads thus, "And the day following Paul went in with us unto James ; and all the elders were present." Verse 19, "And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry, and when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which *believe* ; and they are all zealous of the law." Verse 21, "And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs." 22d, "What is it therefore ? the multitude must needs come together." 23d, "Do therefore this that we say to thee." 24th, "And all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing." 25th, "As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no *such* thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from

blood, and from strangled, and from fornication."

Now by the 20th verse, we see that this council has met to settle a doctrinal point, not of the Jewish, but of the Christian church! And in verse 21, we find, that the whole difficulty arose, as to the manner of admitting *children*—it had nothing to do with adults. The Jews had probably heard of the decision of the council, in reference to receiving the children of the Gentiles, how that their children were not to be circumcised, nor, as they grew up, were they to observe any of the Jewish ceremonies; only they were not to reject the faith, and were to observe specific moral obligations, as mentioned in the 25th verse.

Some may object to this argument, inasmuch as baptism is not mentioned, as being a subject presented for the decision of this council—but, that the only question for it to set at rest was, whether the Jews should not continue to have their children circumcised, as in times before. But let it be remembered, that all those who agitated this question were christians, Jews; they had been pronounced heretics by the high priests of the

Jews, and expelled from the synagogue. (s) It is certain then, that christians must have been in the habit of circumcising their children when they were eight days old, and must have admitted them into the christian church, as their fathers had been accustomed to do, into the Jewish church. But if they were not received into the church, by this method, what occasioned this great agitation? Why should this council of Apostles have been called? They had already decided that circumcision was no violation of the law, and that it availed nothing of itself! Certainly, then, if these children were not received into the bosom of the church, there was a great excitement about nothing, and the council must have meddled with a subject over which they had no jurisdiction! Some advice to parents would have been more consistent.

The fact is, that under the Jewish dispensation, they received the children by circumcision, a sacrifice and purification. And now it appears, that these Christians, Jews,

(s) *Acts xxiv. 14.*—"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they (the Jews) call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers."

on account of the sacrifice of Christ, no longer offered the Dove or Kid—but continued circumcision and purification, (or baptism,) when admitting children into the church. Peter, being the Apostle of the Jews, had taught them, that the faith of the church had not been changed by Christ's coming, for it was a part of the promise of God in the covenant, (*t*) and, that faith in Christ was no new doctrine, as David had believed in Christ. Moreover, it farther appears by this council of the Apostles, that the christian Jews had been in the habit of having their children admitted to the church, and though they circumcised, they also must have baptized them; for Peter had ever taught them, that such was the command of Christ—and baptism was certainly the only symbol that could admit them into the church. (*u*) That these children should be

(*t*) *Acts* ii. 30.—“Therefore (David) being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne.”

(*u*) *Acts* ii. 38.—“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

received into the christian church, was the only question agitated in this council, for decision is certain, (*v*) not whether children should be excluded, but whether the children of believing Jews, being the seed of Abraham, should not continue to keep themselves distinct from the Christian Gentiles by this ancient seal of the covenant, *i.e.* : circumcision. The council decided that, for the present, the prejudices of the Jews should be humored in this respect ; notwithstanding, they also came to the conclusion, that the regulations of the former council concerning the Gentiles, were still to exist ; the Gentiles being considered as grafted into the stock of Abraham, by *faith*, and that their children be received into the church through baptism, the symbol of faith.

Now we know that it was concerning the admission of the children of the Gentiles into the church, that the council spoken of in *Acts* xv. 5, was held—because the ques-

(*v*) *Acts* xxi. 21.—“And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise *their children*, neither to walk after the customs.”

tion under consideration turned upon this point—Do the Gentiles (the adults) through faith, become the seed of *Abraham*, and heirs according to the covenant? Paul, in his epistle to the Galatians, gives us a better understanding of the principles that governed the Apostles in their decision at this council. (*w*) They argued, that God recognized the children of faith to be the true and only children of Abraham, and, as the promise, or covenant of God, that Christ should come, was made with Abraham before he was circumcised, and four hundred and thirty years before the law of circumcision was given, that therefore circumcision could not by any means change or disannul this agreement between God and Abraham; so the true children of Abraham must be reckoned of faith, and not of circumcision.

(*w*) *Galatians* iii. 17.—“And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.” 7th verse, “Know ye therefore, that they which are of *faith*, the same are the *children* of Abraham.” 27th verse, “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.” 29th verse, “And if ye *be* Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

Therefore this council decided, that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles, through faith in Jesus Christ. (x) He says, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's children, and heirs according to the promise."

All that was necessary, then, for the Gentile to become a descendant of Abraham, was, to have faith in Christ and be baptized ! And so the Apostles concluded, that God knew all things from the beginning to the end, and did command Abraham to have all his children join the church when eight days old. So the command to have their children, when infants, join the church, was binding on the Gentiles who had, through faith, become the children of Abraham.

We see, then, that all christians are Abraham's children, and God's command is binding on them to have their children baptized,

(x) *Acts* xv. 14.—"Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name ; as it is written." 16th verse, "After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down ; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up." 19th verse, "Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the gentiles are turned to God."

when infants, even as Abraham's children were circumcised upon the faith of the father. Christ did not by command, or in any other way, disannul this command to Abraham's descendants, but made no distinction, sanctifying their hearts by faith, even as the Jews. Thus it is still binding on all christians, they being the true children of Abraham, to have their children join the church, or covenant, by having the seal baptism applied, when in infancy; therefore, this question was in council decided in the affirmative.

This, it appears, was all that was necessary to convince the Jews, that the children of the Gentiles might be received, even as the children of the Jews themselves, and this corresponds with the idea of Peter in *Acts* ii. 39, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." And Paul, long afterwards, in his epistle to the Romans, as well as to the Galatians, asserted and proved, that circumcision was no longer necessary; yet neither he, nor any other of the Apostles ever spoke against having children admitted by baptism, but, on the contrary, they tell us that whole

families were received by baptism ! (y) Will any one assert, that there were *no* children in these families ! But in I. John we have a sermon addressed to the church, and it is divided as follows : *First*, to the fathers. *Second*, to the young men. *Third*, to the *little children* ! (z) The opening and closing of this discourse, is especially instructive to fathers—but chapter 2d, from verses 1 to 13, is intended particularly for little children. The remainder of the chapter is intended for the young men ; but he frequently classes together these and the little children of his congregation ; and these were all members of the church, who were received, doubtless during infancy—the fathers with their families.

DR. WALL says, “There never was any age, at least since Abraham, in which the children, whether of Jews or proselytes, that were admitted into covenant, had not some badge, or sign of such admission. The male children of Abraham’s race were entered

(y) *I. Corinthians* i. 16.—“And I baptized also the household of Stephanas ; besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.” Also, *Acts* xvi. 15, 33.

(z) See *I. John* ii. 13, 14.

by circumcision. The whole body of the Jews, men, women and children, were in Moses' time, baptized ; after which, the male children of proselytes, that were entered with their parents, were, as well as their parents, admitted by circumcision, baptism, and a sacrifice ; the female children by baptism, and a sacrifice. Now after that, circumcision and sacrifice were to be abolished under the gospel dispensation, there was nothing left but baptism for a sign of the covenant, and of professing religion. This our Savior took, probably as being the easiest, and the least operose of all the rest, and as being common to both sexes, making no difference of male or female, and enjoined it to all that should enter into the kingdom of God.

Origen, who possessed more information than any other man of his day, and who lived near the time of the Apostles, says, "The church received a tradition, or order from the Apostles, to give baptism to little children, also, a little after the period in which Origen lived, a council of sixty-six bishops unanimously decided, that the baptism of infants was not to be delayed to the eighth day after

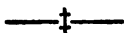
the birth, as circumcision had been, but might be given them at any time before. The question they decided was, not whether infants should be baptized ! for there was no doubt on this point—but, whether they might be baptized before they were eight days old !

Augustine, who was born in the middle of the fourth century, affirms, “The whole church practised infant baptism. It was *not instituted* by councils, but was always in use.”

Pelagius, who lived at the same time, and who had visited the most noted churches in Europe, Asia and Africa, declares that he never heard of any one, even the most impious heretic, who asserted that infants are not to be baptized.

These quotations might be extended, but I forbear, hoping that no one who reads this book, will longer doubt as to the mode of performing baptism—or, who are the proper subjects to receive this sacred symbol.

Appropriate Hymns.



PART I.

How large the promise, how divine—
To Abraham and his seed !
I'll be a God to thee and thine,
Supplying all their need.

PART II.

Jesus the ancient faith confirms,
To our forefathers given ;
He takes young children in his arms,
And calls them heirs of heaven !

PART III.

See Israel's gentle shepherd stand,
With all engaging charms—
Hark ! how he calls the tender lambs,
And folds them in his arms.

Permit them to approach he cries,
Nor scorn their humble name ;
For 'twas to bless such souls as these
The Lord of Angels came.

The Savior kindly calls,
Our children to his breast—
He holds them in his gracious arms,
Himself declares them blest.

Let them approach he cries,
Nor scorn their humble claim ;
The heirs of heaven are such as these—
For such as these I came.

PART IV.

O Lord, encouraged by thy grace,
We bring our infant to thy throne—
Give it within thy heart a place,
Let it be thine and thine alone.

This infant, we by faith commit
To thy kind love, and guardian care—
We lay it at the Savior's feet,
He will not let it perish there.

O, God of Abraham, hear
The parent's humble cry !
In covenant mercy—now appear
While in the dust we lie.

These children of our love,
In mercy thou hast given—
That we through grace, may faithful prove,
In training them for Heaven.

O grant, thy spirit Lord,
Their hearts to sanctify—
Remember now, thy gracious word ;
Our hope on thee rely.

Draw forth the melting tear,
The penitential sigh—
Inspire their hearts with faith sincere,
And fix their hopes on high.

These children now are thine,
We give them back to thee—
O lead them by thy grace divine,
Along the Heavenly way.

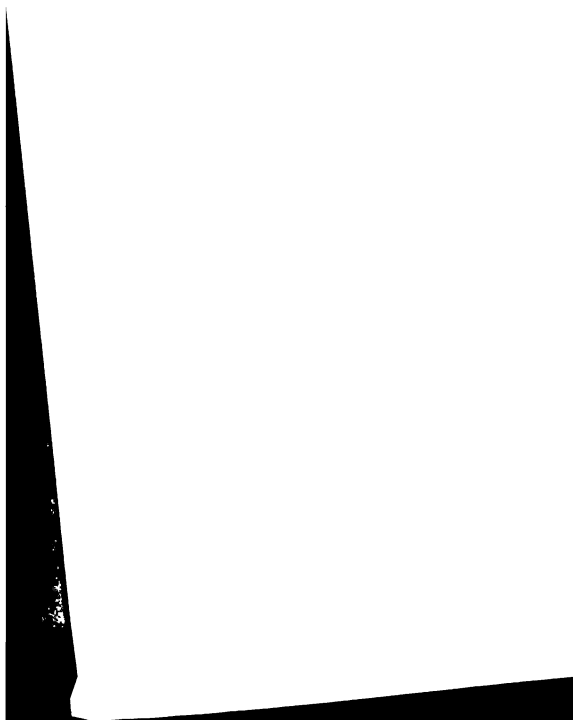






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